

EPA Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

Shenandoah, VA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

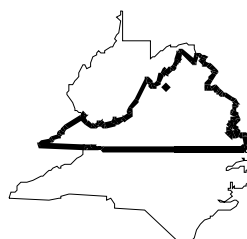
EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA awarded the Town of Shenandoah supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot and additional funding for assessments at brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. The town of Shenandoah is located on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River in Page County, Virginia. The Town built its heritage as an iron-based industrial center and railroad transportation hub. The decline of the iron industry and the decreased rail traffic due to the advent of diesel engines led to an economic downturn for Shenandoah. In an area known as the Big Gem Furnace Tract, located in the center of the Town, the Big Gem Cast Iron Furnace, once the principal producer of iron in the area, was dismantled and later donated to the town by Bethlehem Steel. Although several small factories have since opened, the economy has remained severely depressed, with an unemployment rate of 10.4 percent and a poverty rate of 13.1 percent. In addition, there is very little land available for commercial or industrial enterprise.

Shenandoah targets the 66.8-acre Big Gem Furnace Tract and up to three additional brownfields sites for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. The supplemental project will leverage the partnerships

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Shenandoah, Virginia

Date of Announcement:
March 2000

Amount: \$100,000
Greenspace: \$50,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the Big Gem Furnace Tract, including two greenspace properties, and up to three additional sites for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment.

Contacts:

Town of Shenandoah
(540) 650-8164

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 3
(215) 814-3129

Visit the EPA Region 3 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/brownfld/hmpage1.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

and consensus fostered by EPA's Brownfields Facilitation Pilot support and is the focal point of a larger community revitalization effort to capture the rising heritage tourism industry in the Shenandoah Valley through small business and greenway development. The town aims to eventually develop a recreational center and establish the Big Gem Furnace Historical Park on the Big Gem Furnace Tract. The town believes this redevelopment will attract a significant amount of tourism and create needed jobs, thereby increasing the quality of life for area residents.

OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Shenandoah's primary objective is to use the supplemental assistance to enhance and complement the existing Pilot project by facilitating the reuse of the Big Gem Furnace Tract and other targeted brownfields sites in the community. Specifically, the town plans to redevelop the Big Gem Furnace Tract into a multi-use commercial and historical recreational park. To meet this goal, the Pilot will conduct consensus building, promote community awareness, and develop partnerships. The Pilot plans to conduct environmental assessments and develop cost-effective cleanup and redevelopment plans.

The Pilot will use the greenspace funding to target the former municipal dump located on the Big Gem Furnace Tract and two acres of privately owned land located just north of the dump for greenspace redevelopment. The Pilot plans to incorporate these properties into redevelopment of the Big Gem Furnace Tract as a recreational park with a multiuse trail connecting adjacent neighborhoods, the Shenandoah River, and possibly the Shenandoah National Park.

To accomplish these objectives, the Pilot plans to:

- Establish a list of candidate sites for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment;
- Develop criteria for identifying and ranking sites;
- Prioritize and select targeted sites;
- Conduct Phase I and Phase II assessments at the targeted sites;
- Identify cleanup alternatives and develop a cleanup plan;
- Conduct various outreach and community involvement efforts for the targeted projects;
- Facilitate the development of the Big Gem Furnace Tract into the multiuse recreational park; and
- Conduct Phase I and II assessments on the greenspace properties.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.